Bertillon, Jacques | Encyclopedia.com

Jacques Bertillon (1851–1922) was one of the most prolific and influential quantitative social scientists in France near the turn of the twentieth century. In 1879, Bertillon was hired by the Society des Sciences, which he helped found in 1895 and where he was an active member since 1879. The society's journal contains articles by Bertillon on topics such as the social origins and mortality rates of different occupational groups.

In addition to his activity in France, Bertillon played a leading role in the congresses of the International Statistical Institute, which he helped organize in 1883. In 1895, he thereby succeeded the international statistical congresses initiated by his father.

Concerning alcoholism, Bertillon demonstrated that the per capita consumption of alcohol had increased rapidly over the course of the first half of the nineteenth century. During the 1870s, he began to publish articles on such topics as international comparisons of alcohol consumption. He found that the size of the tax on alcohol had no effect on consumption; the elimination of small distilleries did reduce consumption. He also published numerous articles on the topics of alcoholism and “depopulation.” Attempting to develop a more thorough understanding of each of these problems for the entire French nation.

Bertillon was deeply patriotic Frenchman with strong social convictions. Through his statistical work, he became known for developing ingenious methods of identifying criminals and developed the fingerprinting technique, and types of statistical analysis.

Bertillon's lifelong association with organizations connected with social research began in 1883, when he succeeded his father as director of the statistical bureau of the city of Paris. During his thirty years as director, Bertillon’s influence was reflected in the increasingly lengthy annual reports on social statistics, trends, deaths, marriages, divorces, and so on, that were regularly published by the city of Paris.

His work was one of the most important foundations for Durkheim’s analyses of suicide and divorce. J. Bourdon (1911), in 1897, he also published "L'alcoolisme et les moyens de le combattre jugés par l'expérience." The Société de Statistique de Paris, having been recognized in statistical circles came in 1897, when Bertillon was elected president of the Société de Statistique de Paris, having been a member since 1897. The society’s journal contains articles on topics such as social origins and mortality rates of different occupational groups.

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